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SNATCHES OF SONG

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BY

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(MRS. CAMPBELL OF BALLOCHYLE)

43785

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'DROWNED.'

THEY stand amid the stricken crew,
They only, quiet and still;
All has been done that man may do,
Now they await God's will.

All hope is past, all fear, all care;
Together, silently,
Peacefullest in the moonlight there,
These two girt up to die.

His arm is round her as they stand,
Her head upon his breast;
They can go gladly, hand in hand,
Together, to their rest.

'God has been very good, sweet heart;
One little year ago,
We swore to love till Death should part,—
Death will not part us now;

'You do not fear to die, dear wife,
Thus folded to my breast?'
'Nay, sweet,' she said, 'and fair was life,
But this is perfect rest;

'We'll sleep, dear, in yon track of white,
Where moonbeams touch the sea,
For I think Jesus left such light,
Walking on Galilee.'

And so they died—all fear, all care,
All life, left far behind—
Together, in the moonlight there:—
Death has been very kind.

A SONG OF MIDDLE AGE.

'He could not abide to hear the Spring-tide spoken pulingly of, as if it fades instead of ripening into summer, and youth as if it sets instead of dawns into manhood.'

On Both Sides of the Sea.

O

WHAR are the dew-draps gane,
Sparklin' sae rare?
The lark's clear matin sang
Cleavin' the air?
Whar's a' the freshness fled
O' day's first dawn,
The purple, gowd, an' red,
The joy o' morn?

Whar's the blythe Spring-time noo,
Sae tender green,
That crownt the auld Earth's broo,
Wi' emerald sheen?
Whar's the bit burnie sped,
Wi'ts lauchin' glee?
Whar hides the snaw-drap's head
Can ye tell me?

Aye are the dew-draps gane
Sparklin' sae rare;
The lark's clear matin sang
Ye'll list nae mair.
But by ilk drap o' dew
The green Earth's blest;
The lark her sang's tint noo
To warm her nest.

Aye has the freshness fled
O' dawn's bricht hue,
But the quiet lift owerhead
Smiles warm an' blue.

Ye couldna the blythe burnie keep
Wi'ts lauchin' glee,
But in its steid, a river deep
Flaws to the sea.

Oh, greet na for the dawnin'
Grown into day,
Greet na for Spring-time ripenin'
To Simmer gay;
Spring's made but for the Simmer,
Dawnin' for day,
Youth's April's the forerinner
O' riper May.

An' when through life's het noontime
We've warked our best,
Autumn an' e'en bring wi' them
The 'joy o' hairst.'
The e'en 'ill bring the dew-drap
We've tint sae lang;
We'll hae i'steid o' matins
The vesper sang.

We'll see the gowd an' purple
We saw afore,
Not brichtenin' noo Earth's portal,
But Heaven's door,
Ne'er fadin' noo i' common day
Thae lichts aye wun
Frae a Blessed Face i' that country
That needs nae sun.

FLASHES.

ONE night 'neath my lady's window—
'Twas in the month of June—
The trees cast peaceful shadow,
The lake gleamed in the moon—
Beneath my lady's window,
I sang a quiet tune.

A tune like the summer midnight,
So soft, and peaceful sweet,
With here and there a gleam of light,
Like the moonbeams at my feet,
All dimly, silvery bright,
My lady's ear to greet.

The house loomed large in the darkness,
And silent as the grave,
No sound broke the night's stillness
Save the lake's rippling wave,
No light, in the summer darkness,
Save the light the moonbeams gave.

But sudden, across the window
Of the chamber where she slept,
A bright flash gleamed through the shadow,
And my heart in my bosom leapt,
To greet the light in the window
Where my belovèd slept.

It gleamed for a moment only,
And again the darkness fell,
And I turned in the midnight lonely,
Afar from her to dwell,
But I knew she had heard me only,
And my heart said—'It is well.'

. . . . .

One eve-tide I met in the woodlands,
Her, whom my soul loves best;
The sun had gone down in crimson bands,
And the wee birds sought their nest,
When we met in the dusk of the woodlands,
At the gloaming's hour of rest.

I had laid my heart, for many a year,
Down at my lady's feet,
And never a word or look of cheer,
Had come my love to greet,
From weary year to weary year,
As it lay at my lady's feet.

But sudden, that summer twilight,
As I clasped her hand in mine,
And our eyes met, a glory bright
Made all her dear face shine,
A light of love, through the deepening night,
Leapt up to answer mine.

Who shall translate that glory
  Into poor human speech?
Yet to me it told a story,
  A truth no words could reach,—
Our souls met in that glory,
  And mingled each with each.

It gleamed for a moment only,
  And again the darkness fell,
And I turned in my life all lonely,
  Afar from her to dwell,
With that light as a memory only,—
Yet my heart said 'It is well.'

HAREBELLS—WHAT IS TIME?

(WRITTEN FOR A POETRY GAME.)

I HAVE two harebells in an old, old book,
Dry, withered, pale, yet full of memories.
The first was gathered in a shady nook,
The day my boy first opened his blue eyes;
The last I found far o'er the western wave,
Years after, when I wept upon his grave;
Time is, to man, the space in mercy given,
Betwixt these two, to fit himself for Heaven.

AN IDEAL OF SERVICE.

(THE WIDOW'S MITE.)

To me the Devil spake one day,
And thus I made reply,
Let him that readeth answer me,
Was he right, or was I?

Quoth he, 'You bring your paltry day,
Your poor threescore and ten,—
To Him who fills Eternity,
You dare to offer them.
What cares He for your bubble life,
On whom Time's oceans pall?
'Tis much to you, 'tis nought to Him.'
Said I, 'It is my all.'

Quoth he, 'You think with hands or head
Some work for God to do;
Will He who made Infinitude
Look at your work and you?
Fool! cease your labour, take your ease,
He whom Creations call
Their Maker, think you, you can please?'
Said I, 'It is my all.'

Quoth he, 'You bring your heart's desire,
The treasure most you prize,—
You lay it at His feet, and say,
"Behold my sacrifice."
Nay, keep it, it will glad your heart;
He, at whose footstool fall
Cherubs and Seraphs, sees it not.'
Said I, 'It is my all.'

'Get thee behind me,' then I said,
'For One is on my side,
Greater than thou;—a mite, a widow laid,
At His blest feet, and He replied,

"Well done,"—then will He not despise,
How poor so e'er, and small,
This fleeting life, this work, this sacrifice,—
He'll say "It is thine all."'

AN IDEAL OF SACRIFICE.

(ABRAM'S OFFERING.)

As God to Abram said of old,
'Go take thy son,
Thine only son,
And on mine altar lay;
Because thou lov'st him, thou shalt not withhold
With thine own hand to slay.

So unto me God spake to-day,—
'Go take thy Hope,
Thy life's one Hope,
All that thy soul doth prize;
Tear it from out thy heart,—at my feet lay,
A living sacrifice.'

As he of old times did not stay
To give his son,
His only son,
Although with bitter tears,
So, Lord, would I, though sad, Thy will obey,
And yield the Hope of years.

As when upon the wood of old,
Isaac was laid,
The hand was staid;
'Enough,' God said, 'I see
From me thou wilt not thy most prized withhold:—
I give him back to thee.'

Perchance—I know not—he may say,
'Take back thy Hope,
Thy life's dear Hope,
I ask it not of thee.'
And I, as Abram, bear back on my way
My treasure, joyfully.

It may be—but I cannot know—
Lord, Thine own Son,
Thine only Son,
Thou didst not spare for me,
From *very* Death. Can I not then forego
This Hope of mine for Thee?

If not like him to whom, my God,
Thou spared'st his Son,
But like *Thy* Son,
My Hope Thou canst not spare,
Am I not honour'd more, that like my Lord,
This, my heart's Hope, should fare?

And this I know, as from the dead,
The three days done,
Thou call'dst Thy Son,
To rise and reign with Thee,
So my dead Hope, all earthly dimness fled,
Shall live again with me.

JOHN BROWN OF PRIESTHILL'S WIFE.

THEY shot him at his cottage door,
And his wife was standing near,
But never a word o' grief said she,
Nor dimm'd her e'e a tear.

They tied his hands ahint his back,
An' bound his bonny e'en,
But her face was white, and still, and cauld
As a dead face it had been.

The heath, a' purple i' the sun,
Shone redder where he lay,
When they had warked their wicked will,
An' turned to ride away.

'An' what think ye o' your gudeman noo,
Gude wife?' quoth Clavers rude:—
A flash cam' i' the tearless e'e—
To the white cheek the blude.

She walked with steady step an' prood,
To whar her gudeman lay,
She laid on her lap the shattered head,
An' she wiped the blude away.

Aye thocht I muckle o' my gudeman
An' far mair think I noo;
He's died for the Lord that died for him:—
—God forgi'e them that slew.'

'Twere nocht but just,' quoth Clavers cruel,
Gin ye lay by his side.'
'Aye wark your will,' she answered him,
'Was never gladder bride.'

She sat there still as the gloamin' fell,
An' they turned and rode away,
Still, when the heath grew dusk in nicht,
On her knees the dead head lay;

But when the first star glimmered out
I' the welkin' quiet an' blue,
Ae lang look took she o' the een
She loe'd, sae sichtless noo,

An' syne she shut the eyelids white,
An' kamed the clotted hair,
An' nowed him in his shepherd's plaid
Wi's life blude redden'd sair;

She laid him on the purple heath,
Gently as babe that slept;
Nae word said she till a' was dune,—
Syne sat her doon an' wept.

DEEP SEA GRAVES.

A LITTLE splash in the ocean,
A child's form sunk in the wave,
And the ship, with stately motion,
Steers onward, proud and brave;
But a mother's heart, all broken,
Went down to her baby's grave.

A little hope-flower wither'd,
Cast in the heart's deep sea,
And the life goes on unalter'd,
Bravely and steadfastly;
But ne'er is such bloom regather'd
This side Eternity.

A NOCTURNE.

PEACE, peace where thousands rest
  Day's labour o'er;—
On lonely mountain breast,
  And rocky shore;
Deep down in wooded dell,
  'Mid murmuring leaves,
The holy starlight fell,
  Whispering 'Peace.'

Peace, peace on ocean wave,
  Lonely and deep;
Peace, where in ocean grave
  The lovèd sleep,

Where the low surges sing,
Never to cease,—
Fell, as on sea-bird's wing,
The moonlight's peace.

Peace, peace, oh restless heart,
Longing and lone
Peace, ye whose spirits pant
For voices gone;
Peace, they are near you now
To soothe and bless,—
Round each fair angel brow,
Star-wreathèd 'Peace.'

LOVE MURDERED.

YEA verily, Love is dead;
You did not think of this;
Howe'er her sad heart bled,
You'd staunch it with a kiss,
When it seemed meet to you
Such act of grace to do.

Yes, but it comes too late;
Once such kiss might have healed,
Why did you wait and wait
Till Death the wound had sealed?
'Twas drop by drop life fled,
But now she lieth dead.

You kill'd her—yes, 'tis true,—
  You heard her plead and plead;
Think how she clung to you
  To save—you let her bleed;
You thought you'd make her wait,
And now, it is too late.

She was not eas'ly killed,—
  Clung to your lifted arm;
Sure pity might have filled
  Your heart, to work her harm.
You showered blows thick and fast;—
Well—she is dead at last.

Her pleading eyes no more
  Will vex you with their pain;
They wept full long and sore,
  They'll never weep again;
The long, white, drooping lid
Has all their sorrow hid.

Aye, you may wring your hands,
  Shower kisses on her brow;
She hears not your commands,
  Feels not your kisses now;
Once she had sprung to greet,
Laid glad heart at your feet.

It is no use to weep,
  Ne'er can it be undone;
There, lay her to her sleep,
  You must depart alone.
Your life with Love is o'er,—
Ended for evermore.

Ah! now you moan and cry,
'Will she *ne'er* live again?
Must I bear on for aye,
  This weary, lonely pain?
Will not sweet Love be given,
Though ne'er on earth, in heaven?'

Aye shall *she* live again,
For Love can never die;
A Life that knows no pain,
A Love that's glad for aye.
Yes, Love shall live 'tis true—
I know not—if, for you.

INVITATION TO THE WOODLANDS.

All in the golden summertide,
When the old woods are green,
And the sunbeams through the branches glide,
Gilding the moss between;

And the shadows of the leaves are cast
The ash tree's stems around,
And the buzzing myriads wander past
With a stream's low slumbrous sound;

And the tiny harebell's fair head droops
Among the grasses gray,
And o'er the stream the long fern stoops
Watching the water's play;

And the glancing sunlight glory brings,
Tinging each leaf with gold,
And changing the flitting insect wings
To fairy elves of old;

And there is no voice in all the air,
But that lulling sea of sound,
Above, about, and everywhere,
The quiet old woods around;

Then come to the solemn woodlands,
Thou, who hast borne thy part,
With earnest heart, and labouring hands,
In the world's great busy mart.

And rest where the chequer'd sunbeam
On thy faded brow may lie,
And dream as thou wert wont to dream
In the years that are gone by.

And let life's anxious carefulness
Pass from thy soul away,
And drink thou in the quietness
Of nature reverently.

New armour 'mid the loneliness,
Thou'lt gird on for the fight,
And like a shield, its peacefulness
Shall guard thy heart with might.

As golden robe about thee,
So shall its beauty be,
The holiness and majesty
Of Nature's sanctuary.

Then kneel to God in meekness,
For strength in earth's earnest strife,
So shall the woodland's peacefulnes
Teach thee to conquer life.

A NOVEMBER DAY.

Dreary, and dim, and cheerless,
The wintry twilight rose,
Entering with footstep noiseless
A chamber of repose.

Coldly and stern and sadly,
It touched the sleeping brow,
But its chilly kiss fell lightly,
The weary resteth now.

For the heart, whose longing voidness
Had felt its icy breath,
Now sleeps in calm and stillness,
In the embrace of Death.

A November Day.

Say not the clasp is wrathful
In which the lonely rest,
For calm, at last, and blissful,
She slumbers on his breast.

She, who had longed so vainly
For love in days gone past,
Finds in *his* bosom gladly
Her spirit's home at last.

No more, no more in weakness
Life's lonely path is trod,
Loving with holy meekness,
Death bears her soul to God

'REJOICE WITH THEM THAT DO REJOICE, AND WEEP WITH THEM THAT WEEP.'

THE Dawn's soft-fingered handmaid,
The silver veil of Night,
Was drawing from the sleeping earth
With her touch of magic light,
When o'er a hill-girt valley,
Where soft the shadows lay,
A Lingerer of Moonlight met
A Messenger of Day.

'Where hast thou strayed soft Moonbeam?
The pale gates of the sky
Are opened, and thy sisters dream
In their shadowy home on high;

They are waiting but for thee
To close the ivory door,
And the Dayspring over land and sea
Its glory-flood to pour.'

'Seest thou that cottage lonely,
Beneath the aspen tree?
There dwelleth an aged Christian,
In helpless poverty;
On the open Bible-page,
In solemn light I slept,
And pointed with starry finger
Where 'tis written. "Jesus wept."

'Where yonder shadowy forest
Sleepeth in holy light,
I have glided through the leaf-bowers
In the stillness of the night,
And breathed to a little wanderer,
Whose young heart throbs for love,
Of One who ever loveth her,
Of a Father's home above.

'And where on a mother's breast,
Was laid an infant head,
And a baby form was pressed
In the slumber of the dead,
I have slept on that childish brow
With such a holy smile,
That the lonely mother knew
'Twas but for a little while.

And down in the depths of the solemn sea,
Where the ocean cypress weep,
I have twined my veil of mystery
Round the slumberers of the deep;
Where mermaids chant their mournful psalm,
As they strew the white coral bed,
I have lighted the mighty sepulchre
Of ocean for the dead.

But thou of the golden wing
Whither art thou away,
With light, and song, and beauty,
Glad Messenger of Day?'

'I go to the downy pillow
Where the mother's idol liès,
To open with loving kisses
The laughing dew-bright eyes;
To leave a sunbeam shadow
Upon the golden head,
That everywhere around her
Its blessing may be shed.

And to the early labourer's brow,
To smile in gladness there,
And twine my fairy fingers,
Lovingly in his hair;
And on the young bride's beauty,
In softened glory bright,
Around life's future pathway
To shed a hallowed light.
And in the laughing fountain
To mirror my golden wing,
And to glance through dim old forests,
With lone streams murmuring

'Farewell, farewell soft Moonbeam,
To both a charge is given,
To bless Earth's sorrowing children,
And to lead them home to Heaven;
We shall meet when night's solemn music
Hath breathed its shadowy spell
Again at the sunset's portal,—
Farewell, farewell.'

ROMAUNT OF THE HAG'S LEAP.

Black was her hair, as black as nicht,
White was her broo, as snaw-wraith white,
Dark were her een, and wild, and free,
Yet saft was the smile o' Ellesley

She herded her faither's sheep alane,
She herded them up the Rosa Glen,
An' there, aneath the birken tree,
Young Ronald met wi' Ellesley.

He tauld her, her voice was saft an' law
As the wimplin' burnie's gurglin' flaw,
He tauld her nae star i' the winter sky
Was bricht as the e'e o' Ellesley.

He keepit a sprig o' the heather bell
Frae the wreath on her snaw-white broo that fell;
An' there, aneath the birken tree,
He plighted his troth wi' Ellesley.

He woo'd her when the morn shone bricht,
He woo'd her 'neath the pale starlicht
Aft, aft they met by the birken tree—
Alack, alack for Ellesley!

He tauld her he maun gae awa',—
Maun gae to his faither's knightly ha';
'But I'll come back an' marry thee,
An' mak' thee Lady Ellesley.'

She herded her faither's sheep alane,
She herded them up the Rosa Glen;
Wi' a big saft tear in her black, black e'e,
Thinkir' o' him sat Ellesley.

Whan by there cam' a neebor lad,
An' he was whistlin' blythe an' glad;
'An' what brings ye here sae cheerily?
An' what brings ye here?' quoth Ellesley.

'Hae ye na heard the news that came,
Hoo young Laird Ronald's comin' hame
Wi' the bonnie bride frae the south countree
Yestreen he wed wi',—Ellesley?'

She gied nae scream, nae word said she,
But the tear-drap dried i' her black, black e'e;
As she stood aneath the birken tree,
Oh, an awfu' smile smiled Ellesley.

The moon it shone fu' fair that nicht,
An' in Rosa's Glen it glimmered bricht,
Whan out frae the hill-side shadows gray
A' silently cam' Ellesley.

For by there passed on the t'ither side,
Young Ronald an' his fair-hair'd bride,
Oh, a bonny, saft-eyed bairn was she
To dree the curse o' Ellesley.

The shimmerin' moonlicht's glistenin' sheen
Shaw'd twice ten feet that yawned atween,
But clean across the gap leaped she,—
By Ronald's bride stood Ellesley.

She cursed her whar she stood that nicht,
She cursed her by the pale moonlicht,
Oh, an awsome thing it was to dree
The woman's curse o' Ellesley.

She swithered, the bonnie bride, an' fell
Doon, doon through that black yawning hell—
Oh, ower tender a blue-eyed bairn was she,
To dree that curse o' Ellesley.

Ae shriek gied Laird Ronald sae wild an' shrill,
That the moor-fowl started frae the hill,
An' after his bonnie bride sprang he,
An' there, alane, stood Ellesley.

She saw him fa' by the pale moonlicht,
She heard his shriek through the simmer nicht,
But a wild glint shone in her black, black e'e
As back, alane, gaed Ellesley.

. . . . . .

Three corpses by a shepherd boy
Were fand on the heath o' wild Glen Cloy;
Wi' his bride in his arms, young Ronald lay,
An' his head on the heart o' Ellesley.

MINISTERING SPIRITS.

'Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation?'

THROUGH the hushed air of evening, ere the day's last crimson light,
Blent with the first star's silver beauty, had faded into night,
A host of angel ministers winging their homeward way,
Spake of the work that they had done for the dear Lord that day.

Some told of little children on whose quiet hearts they'd laid
The lily Innocence, whose hands they'd claspèd as they prayed,

Whose lives they'd wreathed with gladness; and the
holy angels smiled,
As they answered low and softly, 'Jesus was a little
child.'

Some spake of earth's poor wanderers, fainting on
life's rough road,
They had taught to lean their weakness upon the
strength of God;
Of flowers in graveyards springing, Hope's smiles
where Sorrow slept;
And the angel heads bent meekly as they answered,
'Jesus wept.'

And some of Death's dark valley their wings had
lined with light,
Of the crown they held, still brightening before the
fading sight;
Of the dead borne gently Homeward—then one low
voice replied,
While, rev'rently, the holy angels veiled their faces—
'Jesus died.'

A NEW YEAR'S POEM.

Another circle added
  Unto Life's tree;
  Upon the sea
Another ripple widened;
  Tender and wee,
  First ring on tree,
  Ripple on sea,
Wide ere they ended.

A little life, God's making,
  Cast in the deep,
  The eternal sleep
Of the great ocean waking;

Slow circles creep,
Widening each sweep,
Over the deep,
Its quiet rest breaking.

Lord, with each circle added
Unto Life's tree,
Oh may we see,
Another shoot spring upward;
Tender and wee
Each shoot may be,
Yet visibly,
May each grow heavenward.

Oh may each ripple widening
Life's great deep o'er,
Still, more and more,
Homeward be tending,
Till ocean hoar;
All circled o'er,
On the bright shore
Of Heaven, ending.

SUNSET.

Upon the heathery knoll we stood;
Her hand was clasped in mine,
And, glistening through the autumn wood,
Darted the clear sunshine.

My Flower, my Flower, her golden hair
Gleamed in that radiance bright,
Fit crown, it seemed, for saint to wear
Where angels walk in light.

We stood and watched the crimson ray
From the quiet heavens depart,
And leave the old woods dim and gray
But light was in my heart.

I deemed that glory ne'er could pass
From my darling's radiant brow,
But 'twas the sunset's light, alas!
The night has followed now.

Untrue — oh, child, hadst thou but died,
That light had not been gone;
Thy bright head brighter glorified
In realms that need no sun.

For faith that shone like sunlight here
There had but purer grown,
And Love but tenderer and more dear;
Now Faith and Love are gone.

And thou hast left my heart, my Flower,
Lonely amidst the night,—
As old dim woods when day is o'er
—There is no light, no light.

THIS DAY A YEAR AGO.

THIS day a year ago, this day a year ago!
The place is little changed,—
The swallows skim round the eaves,
The passion-flower at the window
Shines through its dark green leaves,
—And the place is little changed.

This day a year ago, this day a year ago!
The sun lies on the grass,
High spread the arching trees,
In the old woods the 'cushey doo'
Moans its sweet melodies,
—And the place is little changed.

This day a year ago, this day a year ago!
Still circling mountains keep
Guard over Solway's sand,
Blue sea, blue hills, blue sky together flow,
Sweet mingling water, air and land,
—And the place is little changed.

This day a year ago, this day a year ago!
The place is little changed,
Yet something is wanting here;
On scene and on heart rests a shadow,
They knew not the by-past year,
Though the place is little changed.

This day a year ago, this day a year ago!
Oh face I loved so dear!
Oh little, tender hand!
It is you I miss, I know,
From the familiar land,
Though the place is little changed.

This day a year ago, this day a year ago
Ah never I missed before
That loving birthday meeting,—
Sure must the tongue be powerless now,
When it forgets that greeting,
Though the place is little changed.

This day a year ago, this day a year ago!
Oh loved one you were here,
And poor was the love I gave,
How poor! Yet now I think you know
My heart lies in your grave,
Though the place is little changed.

This day a year ago, this day a year ago!
Ne'er can that time return,
Yet a better birthday's greeting
I shall hear from your lips I know,
When their kiss seals our next meeting,
—And the place is all that's changed.

FLOATING AWAY.

'Pale and unreal in the moonlight, the river floated them away.'—DICKENS.

'T'WAS on a solemn eventide
Beneath the starry sky,
That on a silver'd river's side
A man stood silently.

He cast on that river lone
Roses once bright and fair,
And the waters murmuring on
His heart's fond treasure bear.

Pale and unreal in the moonlight
The withered flowers float slow;
And with them Life's stream that midnight,
Bears hopes of long ago.

Near to his heart those flowers had lain
In their first crimson pride;
Pale and unreal to the distant main,
Bears them the moonlit tide;

A lily hand he had deemed his own,
Itself, with those buds, had given;—
The hand resigned—the buds alone
But mock his dream of heaven.

He watched them 'neath the darkness
Of the o'ershadowing tree,
And where the moon with brightness
Silvered them quietly.

And then when the river bore them
  Far out beyond his sight;
And darkness had closed o'er them,—
  He turned in the solemn night.

And from his heart that midnight
  Floated youth's hopes away;
Yet bright and soft the moonlight
  Touched Life's stream quietly.

Calm on Time's silver river,
  That evetide's blossoms lay,
Pale and unreal for ever,
  Floating away.

A FIRST BIRTHDAY.

(January 6, 1871. A.G.M.)

And this is thy first birthday
In the far heaven.
I know thou art not given,
Poor years to reckon by,
In yon bright sky;
Yet we, on earth, who stay,
Fain on thy grave would lay
A fresh immortelle wreath, and say,
'This is thy natal day.'

It seems to bring us nearer
Thee, where thou art,

To feign thou still hast part
In landmarks on our way;
In thine Eternity
We lose thee—our faint sight
Seeks still our Star, how bright
Soe'er the heaven's far height,
Where it is lost in light.

That glory is not *thou*;
For *thee* we sigh,
To our sad hearts as nigh,
As in the days of old,
When we might fold
Thine heart to ours—so now we lay
Flowers on thy grave and say,
'So bind we thine Eternity
To Time's brief day.'

Yet e'en the flowers we bring,
Proclaim, we know,
Not really is it so;

No fading earthly bloom,
We lay upon thy tomb:
Red rose and fair lily,
For *our* birth-feasts—for *thee*,
Deathless immortelles—speaking audibly
Ours but of Time—thine of Eternity.

THE SEA-BURIAL.

(AN IRISH LEGEND.)

THE tide was out on Erin's shore,
When, by the sunlit wave,
The clansmen their latest chieftain bore
To his ancestral grave.

Not in the gloom of abbey gray
Was stately requiem sung,
But the furrowed sea-rocks solemnly
To that wild death-keen rung;

For by the free, blue, sunlit sea
They laid him to his rest,
His withered hands clasped reverently,
And the cross upon his breast.

Full many a tear on that aged brow
In the glittering sunlight lay,
As each clansman his bared head bowing low,
From the lone shore turned away.

For his burial band eye may not see,
Nor mortal ear may hear
The song of old Ocean's jubilee,
When he welcomes his children dear.

•

The tide crept up, and the twilight star
Shone o'er the old man's rest,
Silv'ring with quiet light from far,
The pearl cross on his breast.

And from the waters dark and calm,
The sea-king rose that night;
All chaunting a low and solemn psalm,
Followed his daughters white;

Bright pearl-wreaths bound their glowing hair
As they floated hand in hand
On the moonlit sea,—oh, unearthly fair
Was that mystic burial band!

The tide was full, and they stood around,
Their long locks floating free,
For their pearls the old man's head have crowned
For his tomb in the solemn sea.

They bore him in their lily hands,
Their tresses o'er him swept,
When a tone was heard from the distant sands,
As the wail of one that wept;

And a crone, scarce earthly, weird and wild,
Crouched. gazing on the wave;
She had borne him in her arms, a child,—
She must see him to his grave,

But the mermaids ceased their chanted keen,
And wreathed up their flowing hair,
And faded away in the moonlight's sheen,
As a tone on the summer air.

The tide was out, but a pale corse lay
On the shining sands alone,
His hands were clasped as yesterday,
But the pearly cross was gone.

All mournfully they laid him down
'Neath an old cypress tree,
Without a cross, and without a crown,
Close by his native sea.

But every night a spirit white
Floats o'er the glistening wave,
And solemnly, by the pale moonlight,
She chants beside his grave;

And she lays a cross on his earthly bed,
That her ocean son may rest,
Although no pearl crown decks his head,—
Christ's symbol on his breast.

SPRING BLOSSOMS.

BEAR them, bear them softly,
The youthful to their rest,
Whisper, whisper gently,
For they are blest;
Lightly place them,
In kindred earth,
Again embrace them,
Earth to earth.

Weep not, weep not sadly
Over their rest,
Praise ye, praise ye gladly,
For they are blest;
Seemeth life lonely,
Since they are fled?
Mourn for thyself only,—
Weep not the dead.

Weep not the dead!
The spring bloom faded
Is but the brightness fled
Ere it was shaded;
Say not untimely
The weary are gone,
Though scarce shineth dimly
The star of the morn.

Nor for thyself sorrow,
Long, broken-hearted;
The autumn tints follow
When summer hath parted.
Weep not, weep not sadly
Over their rest;
Praise ye, praise ye gladly,
For they are blest.

'UNTRULY CALLED UNTRUE.'

Am I then false? Is it untrue
  True to myself to be?
  Then falsehood is true verity,
And truth itself untrue.

I said I loved her, nor untruly spoke,—
  I thought I loved her then;
  I loved as one who dreams—but when
True love was born, sudden I woke,

And all the former vision fled away.
  It was as one who deemed
  The morning star the sun, and dreamed
Its twilight all the perfect day;

And fixed on it his hope, till far
All the bright east on his astonished gaze
Glows into glory—lost in the bright rays
Of day's true sun, in vain he seeks his star.

Is it untrue that he no longer dare
Call star the sun?—true he may weep
The sweet light lost, and gently keep
In tender memory its twilight fair;—

But who shall blame that in the glory bright
Where glows the god of day,
In vain he seeks his star? or say
He is untrue, because it's lost in light?

THE PARISH GRAVEYARD.

THERE'S a little parish graveyard
That overlooks the sea;
Below the waves break ceaseless,
In glad monotony;
Above the grass is green and soft,—
As children we played there,
Dear Mary, with the merry laugh,
Glad eyes, and sunny hair.

Through the little parish graveyard,
Above the glittering sea,
We passed that summer morning
You gave yourself to me,

In the little moss-grown chapel,
'Mid the graves of buried men,
Where the blue sea sings 'Te Deum,'—
Dear Mary, dearer then.

To the little parish graveyard
Beside the sleepless sea,
I brought you once again, Mary,
Asleep so peacefully;
I left you and your baby,
There where the daisies grow,
With God in that little graveyard,—
Dear Mary, dearest now.

A CHILD'S REVERIE.

A CHILD sat in the twilight,
By a fair summer sea,
And she lookèd out into the night,
Sadly and silently.

The blue lone waters laved around,
Through the soft evening calm,
And solemnly they breathed a sound,
As a distant battle psalm;

For the wrinkles of day's labour
Were smoothed from old Ocean's brow,
And 'Peace,' by the hand of the Saviour,
Was stamped on his bosom now.

But the child sat there all sadly,
For her life look'd dim and cold;
And her heart and her hope drooped wearily
From her glorious dreams of old.

And the quiet and common duty
Seem'd a burden she could not bear,
And her soul longed for a beauty
She found not anywhere;

Then a star rose in the distance
Of the far eastern sky,
And she heard, in the solemn silence,
Soft angel tones float by.

And she looked 'mid the dimness and darkness
To that pure light afar.
And bowed her head to listen,
To the song of the Evening Star.

It told of many a weary one
  It had comforted and blest;
Of many dark and lonely
  It had lighted on to rest.

To many weak and struggling
  It had cheered the weary way,
To many sad and dying
  Had bre-thed of heaven's own day.

'Go thou as I have gone,—
  There are weary and opprest,
There are struggling ones and worn,
  Who by *thee* may be blest;

'Nor grieve if all alone,
  Still thy deep heart shall be,
Go to thy Saviour for the love
  That others find in thee.

'And He shall comfort thee—oh, better far
Than mortal tongue can tell,
And bright and calm as the evening star
Shall thy life be—farewell.'

THE FLIGHT OF TIME.

'DAWN in the East!' the matin star
Sang over land and sea,
'Dawn in the East!' the night afar,
Caught the wild melody.

Glad was that tone as through Eden's bowers
It floated on zephyr wing,
And angel Hours to the dewy flowers,
Whispered the song they sing.

Fair was the land where the sunbeams lay
Soft on the wakening earth,
Shady the trees where the young leaves' play
Laughed o'er the morning's birth.

Bright were the flowers in that sunny land,
And pure the summer air,
For Innocence stood hand in hand,
With Truth and Beauty there;

And there were rivers flowing
In the light of Eden's day,
And with their waters glowing
Thou hastedst on thy way.

. . . . . .

'Tis long, 'tis long since the seraph's lay
Sang o'er thy birth,
Since first the rosy portals of the Day
Oped on the earth.

Thy wing is faint and weary,
For now earth's dust is there,
Thy path is dark and dreary,
Through the sin-burdened air;

And tears have wet the pinions
Once dipt in living springs,
And Sorrow's dark dominions
Stretch 'neath thy drooping wings;

And breaking hearts around thee
Send up their longing sigh,
And death's dark chain hath bound thee
To dull mortality.

. . . . . .

But on and onward hasting,
Not long thy course shall be,
Soon shall a place of resting
Open its morn for thee:

Not long shall Earth's sad story
Thus clog thine upward wing;
A morn of brighter glory
Welcoming angels sing;—

That morn in Eden's gladness,
  Where first began thy flight,
That journey through earth's sadness,
  All swallowed up in light.

'Dawn in the East!' the matin star
  Sang then o'er land and sea,
'Dawn in the East!' thy Home afar
  Shall sing to welcome thee.

THE GREEK GIRL.

Hush! for I hear them through the silent hill
At the hour when the shadows fall,
And their wild low tones o'er my heart-strings thrill,
And the blood runs chill,
And the pulse is still,
At the voice of their shadowy call.

I hear them, they come from the silent streams
Of the far-off voiceless shore,
On whose deep wave the Starlight beams,
And the Morning gleams,
And the Shadow dreams
Never for ever more.

I hear them—they call—shall I answer not
When the Loved and the Dead is there?
Shall he say that the maiden he loved, forgot?
That she answered not,
In his lonely lot,
To the voice of his spirit's prayer?

Not so, not so, this wild mountain bed
When the day's glad course is o'er,
Shall pillow the faithful's weary head,
And the purple heather shed,
It's bloom o'er the dead,
The weary, for evermore.

It was far away where thou call'dst me first,
Thou voice of the Silent Shade!
In the sunny home where the bright flowers burst,
And the starlight gushed,—
And the waters husht
Heard, as they played.

Thou call'dst and I answered—I heard thy tone
When it spake in love's whisperings there,
Of the moonlit sea whence that voice hath gone,
And the billows moan,
And the midnight lone,
Breathing thy prayer.

'Twas morn on the waters—its silver light
On my own eastern sea,
When thou spak'st again and that voice of might,
O'er the waters bright,
Called through the night
Of Death, to follow thee.

I knew where that breath on the waters led,
To what doom of dread and fear;
But what to me though Death's wings were spread
Above my head,
If the Dead,
And the Loved were near?

'Twas night when that shadowy tone stole last
From thy bed on the ocean's breast;
Where, 'neath the moon's soft radiance cast,
Touch'd by no sweeping blast,
Thou slumb'rest at last,
Belovèd, at rest.

I hear, I hear, shall I answer not,
When the Loved and the Dead is there?
Shall he say that the maiden he loved forgot?
That she answered not,
In his lonely lot,
To the voice of his spirit's prayer?

Not so, not so, this wild mountain bed,
When the day's glad course is o'er,
Shall pillow the Faithful's weary head,
And the purple heather shed
Its bloom o'er the dead,
Thine, thine for evermore!

'THY WORK, WHERE IS THY WORK?'

T. CARLYLE.

WHEN these earthly scenes have faded,
And this life all dim hath grown,
And by fleshly garb unshaded,
Thou stand'st before the throne;

When in earth's familiar places
Thy footstep's heard no more,
And old, loving, kindly faces
Look not for thee at the door;

When in 'midst of worlds unknown,
In His Eternity,
O man, while standing there alone,
God asks thy work of thee.

When the day shall be all over,
With its garish flare of light,
And about and above thee hover
Quiet, everlasting night;

And the gildings and the flatteries
That mask'd life here below,
Vanish before the 'verities'
Of her still presence now.

And the day is done for ever,
And thy work *must* be shown,
And other side the river,
Thou standest all alone.

When through thy soul the starlight
Thrilleth with solemn spell,
Could'st thou beneath the eyes of night
Answer, 'I have done well?'

Oh help us, Saviour, help us,
Ere yet the day be gone,
That Thy 'Well done' may greet us
From the Eternal Throne.

ALONE.

ALONE, though around are gathering
Proud forms, and bright, and fair ;
Alone 'mid the rejoicing,
Of nature everywhere.

Alone 'mid kindness gushing
From friendly hearts and true ;
Alone 'mid bright cheeks flushing
With earnest love to you.

Alone, although on lip and brow
Soft smiles are beaming bright;
Alone, although from eye and tone
Each other heart gleans light ;

Alone, alone, for this is not
The love for which you sought;
Aye more alone, for love must hide
From love each saddening thought.

Alone, while gently soothing
The weary and the weak;
Alone, for in thy heart are tones
Thou ne'er mayst think to speak.

Alone for from thy heart's strange depths
That love-dream cannot part;
Alone but for its mystery
Of glory in thy heart.

Alone amidst the music
That floateth on the air,
Alone, for the tone thou seekest
Thy spirit finds not there.

Alone, alone for ever,
In gladness and in pain;
Alone, alone, for never
Answers that echoing strain.

Alone, yet when heaven's breezes
The Lamb's new song shall bear,
Alone no more for ever,
That tone shall meet thee there.

BOAT SONG.

HASTE where the billows flush with light,
Above the deep sea caves,
Haste where the sunbeams sparkle bright,
Over the rippling waves.

Our bark is on the waters now,
'Neath the glad light of dawn,
The foam is sparkling round its prow,
And laughing to the morn;

The sea-birds on the wave's dark breast
Float 'neath the sunny ray,
And mermaids to their watery rest
Bear back their mourning lay.

The ocean cypress far beneath
The glancing waves may be,
And strange flowers wreath the brow of Death,
Far in the deep blue sea;

Young forms and brave may slumber there,
The sea weed for their bed,
And pearls may bind the flowing hair
Of ocean's holy dead.

Above, the waters sparkle bright,
Beneath the sun's glad ray,
The morning awakes in dewy light
Over the waves away!

LONGFELLOW'S 'REAPER AND FLOWERS.'

THE tones were soft and touching,
The words were sad and calm,
And like the moonlight's gushing,
Breathed that low solemn psalm.

Pure as an angel's blessing,
Calm as Death's holy smile,
As hope and faith 'mid suffering,
Sounded that voice the while.

It told of death and sorrow
Yet its tones breathed not of pain,
For it spake of a brighter morrow,
When the flowers should bloom again;

To the restless heart all softly,
As a stray tone of heaven,
As a strange angel lullaby,
That holy song was given.

And life with its griefs and gladness
For a while grew hushed and calm,
As the soul bowed down to listen
Unto Death's solemn psalm.

THE OLD ASH TREE.

GLANCING in the sunbeams,
  Shimmering in the rain,
Laughing to the breezes,
  It meets me again;
The sunlight streameth o'er it,
  Like waves from a golden sea,
Bathing the busy triflers
  Of the old ash tree.

'Twas thus the sunset lingered,
  Long, long ago,
Bathing in floods of glory
  Blossom and bough;

Breathing wild spells of light,
  Strange dreams of mystery,
As it kissed the little dreamer
  By the old ash tree.

But now though the sunlight streameth
  It is not so,
Though still the dreamer standeth
  As long, long ago.
For life's haze hath fallen around
  The light of childish glee
And the glory all hath fled
  From the old ash tree.

JACOB'S LADDER.

THEY are near and around us ever,
The holy and the good,
Though our dim eyes see never
Their blessèd neighbourhood;

Yet amid the spirit's silence
Sometimes we hear their wings,
As faintly far through the distance
The gush of hidden springs;

Still hear we their steps descending
With blessing as of yore,
Though we see the path ascending
From Earth to Heaven no more;

Though the starry way hath faded,
Where once the angels trod,
And the world's wild tumult shaded,
The path from man to God ;

Yet come they 'mid the stillness
Of the weary spirit's rest,
While the stars shine in the quietness
Of Heaven's glorious breast.

They come with strength for weakness,
Till life's long wanderings cease,
With blessing and with meekness—
God's messengers of peace.

THE WATCH-KNOWES.

(AN OLD ROMAN CAMP, NOW A BURYING PLACE.)

'Till the day dawn, and the shadows flee away.'

'WATCHING for the sunrise,
Over the distant sea?
Or straining longing eyes,
Red beacon-fires to see,
Flaming from hills afar,
Watchwords of liberty?
Waiting till even star,
Bring back thy Love to thee?

'Why waitest thou alone,
Upon the green Watch-Knowe,
Where Runic Cross of stone,
Marks old Rome's camp ground now,

Where stately sentry stood
Full many a year ago,
Gazing o'er Solway's flood,
Why lonely waitest thou?'

'Yea, am I waiting here,
The sun's first ray to see;
On hill-tops far and near,
First flash of liberty;
My love to greet, though late,
At evetide joyfully;
Yea, for all these I wait,
Light, Love, and Liberty.

'But 'tis for brighter Day,
Than e'er o'er Solway shone;
For higher Liberty
Than ever earth hath known;
For Love, more true and deep,
To watch and wait alone,
I lay me down to sleep,
'Neath the Watch Knowes Cross of stone

ADYAR.

(Madras. Sabbath. Dec. 23. 1866.)

The hush of Sabbath evening
  Stealing o'er Indian seas,
The golden sunset reddening
  Behind the dark palm trees;
The arching banyans throwing
  Cool shadows on the grass,
The fitful fireflies showing
  Bright glimpses as they pass.

On the still, darkening river,
  Slow winding to the sea,
Ne'er shone the moon's first quiver
  On merrier company;

Deep, manly voices ringing,
And silver, girlish glee,
Soft mingling with the singing
Of evetide's lullaby.

But the River they crost that twilight,
Was other river far
Than waters still and starlit
Of tranquil Adyar;
And the Shore these four were winning,
Was other shore, I ween,
Than those banks where moonbeams streaming,
Made spots of silver sheen.

Home, sadly, on the morrow,
They brought them cold and white;
But a Home that knows no sorrow,
Had welcomed them that night.
They have crost the silent River,
They have reached the Shining Shore,
The Sabbaths, ending never,—
Safe Home, for evermore.

HOME SICKNESS.

Wearily, wearily, riseth the sun,
And wearily setteth he
When all the weary day is done,
Over the weary sea.

Wearily shineth the eastern moon
O'er palm and banyan tree,
And bright, bright stars look sadly down,
And twinkle wearily.

The fishers on the inland lakes
Gleam in the sunset ray,
And moonbeams glint through palmy brakes,
Where bright the fireflies play;

The feathery casarinos shake,
Dark 'gainst the glowing sky,
The banyan's hundred arches make,
A Forest Sanctuary.

The night-breeze trembles lovingly,
On sails far out at sea,
And there my eyes turn wearily,
And tears fall silently.

They glide through moonlight calm and white,—
Those swift wings noiselessly,
And all the lonely track shines bright,
My home, that leads to thee.

Oh, could I lay me down and rest
On that familiar shore,
In the old land I love the best,
I would not wander more.

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Wearily, wearily riseth the sun,
And wearily setteth he,
When all the weary day is done,
Over the weary sea.

A DREAM.

Oft in the long, long scorching day,
  Beneath an Indian sky,
In the still house, all silently,
  As hour by hour slips by,—

Without, while fierce the sun beats down,
  Within, all still and dark,
A fly that buzzes through the room
  The only sound you mark;—

A sweet, sweet dream comes o'er me
  Of green woods far away,
Where, with a child's wild gladsome glee,
  Once I was wont to play.

With grass and soft moss carpeted,
And green, green sorrel leaves,
And tall trees waving overhead
In the soft summer breeze,

And water rippling, rippling through,
Now shadowed, dim and lone,
Now sparkling where the wild ferns grew,
Now hid by mossy stone.

I see the little country kirk,
With square uncushioned seat,
I smell the mint and southernwood
The auld wives find so sweet;

I see the bairnies trooping home
From school, their wee feet bare;
The lassies curtsey as they come,
The laddies tug their hair.

The day steals on, the dream keeps growing—
Hark! then, what sound was that?
Surely I heard sweet water flowing.
'Please, ma'am, done wet the tat.'

'BLIND, BLIND, BLIND.'

WANDERING drearily
Faint and opprest,
Weeping so wearily,
Finding no rest,—
Lost in the wilderness,
Lonely and leaderless,
Blind and distrest.

Listening so breathlessly,
Fountains to hear,
Dying all hopelessly,
Water so near,

Hagar disconsolate,
Woman all desolate,—
God doth appear.

Faint one, all reverently
Drink of that tide,
Blind one, all trustingly
Lean on that guide;
In the dark wilderness,
No longer Leaderless,
Close to His side.

Lone one, all lovingly
Come to His breast,
Weak one, all tenderly
Thou shalt be blest;
Living in joyfulness,
Dying in hopefulness,
There thou shalt rest.

'HE SHALL LEAD THE BLIND BY A WAY THAT THEY KNOW NOT.'

LIFE'S long road trod, Death's river crost,
On Heaven's happy shore,
A ransomed spirit, once nigh lost,
Dwelt, ne'er to wander more.

The angels asked him whence he came,
What weary way he'd trod,
Who had enrolled his earthly name,
Among the sons of God?

'Long, long and dark; dark, dark and long,
The road Thou led'st me, Lord,
From the far away days of the cradle-song,
To the loosing Life's silver cord.

'A poor blind child in an unknown land,
A child without a guide,
I stumbled and strayed and saw not the Hand,
The loving Hand at my side.

'Full often I wandered far away,
Then wearily turnèd back;
And often, despairing I fell by the way,
That seemèd without a track.

'Sometimes the sharp rocks cut my feet,
And wild thorns tore my hand;
And through winter's rain, and summer's heat,
I groped through the dreary land.

'Bewildered and weary I wandered on,
Till I sank in a River wide;
I thought that every hope was gone,
As I felt the cold flowing tide;

'But as Siloam's waters long ago
Wash'd dimness from the blind,
Beneath that dark Death-river's flow
I left all dark behind.

'Safe now upon this blessèd shore
I see the path I trod,
How every wandering step before
Still led me up to God.

'I see the Arm, unseen before,
That circled me around;
I see the glorious Head that wore
For me, a thorny crown.

'Safe, safe at last, my body laid
In earth's green lap to rest,
My spirit 'mid the mansions made
For those whom Jesus blest.'

The angel throng, at that dear word,
With heads low bowed, replied,
While all the host of Heaven heard,
'Worthy the Lamb that died.'

FOLLOW THE LEADER.

A SONG FOR THE PARTED.

He has put us in different squadrons,
  Old comrade of mine,
The rock where stands the City
  By different paths to climb.
Apart, to fight the battle;
  Apart, to face the foe;
Apart, to force the bulwarks,
  The pearly gates below.

Ah fain had we shoulder to shoulder
  Together marched to the fight;
Together, the battle were pleasure,
  Together, each burden light;

We think we had scaled far quicker
The rock where the Ramparts stand,
Had our Leader thought fit to let us
Climb upwards hand in hand.

Ah, comrade, He knew us better,
Our Captain kind and wise;
Alone on the gates of the City
Each soldier must bend his eyes.
Beneath the rock's cool shelter,
In pastures green and still,
It had been so sweet to linger,
We might never have climb'd the Hill.

Courage, then, fellow soldier;
Be brave and stout of heart;
Who follow the self-same Leader
Can never be far apart;
Who fight 'neath the self-same banner
Will sure the same triumph share;
Who besiege the self-same City
Will meet when they enter there.

We'll meet in our Captain's presence,
Who led us the long fight through;
When both reach Him we follow,
We must reach each other too.
With stedfast faces forward,
Climb then, till the Siege be done,
And with Him, and with each other,
We rest in the City won.

'WILL THERE BE WHIPS IN HEAVEN?'

'WILL there be whips in Heaven?' said
A prattler at my knee,
With earnest eyes and flaxen head
Uplifted anxiously.

I had been telling of a Land
With streets of golden sheen,
Where walk the white-robed angel band
Fair pearly gates between;

A Land where a living river
Flows amid pastures green,
Where cloud nor tempest ever
Shadow the radiant scene.

And 'Will there be whips up yonder?'
Is the question he asks the while,
With blue eyes wide with wonder—
I pause e'en while I smile.

The answer seems so simple, yet,
When I meet the anxious eye,
And see the small hand fondling it,
His toy bought yesterday;

I cannot tell the little child,
That, amid the glories given
To bless the ransom'd undefiled,
There are no whips in Heaven.

For what were Heaven to baby mind,
Without his whip to-day?
'My darling, all you want you'll find
In that bright Land,' I say.

And he clasps his new whip fondly
  Close to his little breast,
And the blue eyes brighten gladly,
  And the little heart's at rest.

But the simple childish wonder
  Wakes many thoughts and deep,
And I sit me down to ponder,
  When the little one's asleep.

'Will there be whips in Heaven?' Why
  Smile at the childish prayer?
At the eyes so blue and anxious?—
  My whips, can I then spare?

Methinks God smiles on my treasure, even
  As I on the blue-eyed boy,
He knows that Heaven would scarce be Heaven
  To each without his toy.

And He answers my own wild yearning,
'Will the joy I so cling to here,
My nature's rest and crowning,
Be mine in yonder sphere?'

As I answered the child's quaint question,
'When babes are grown to men,
Their playthings are forgotten;
You may not wish it then.

'Peace, foolish heart! by a Father's hand
There shall all joy be given;
If whips you want in yon bright Land,
There *will* be whips in heaven.'

THE LOST NOTE.

THE lark is in the sky, Mary,
The dew is on the grass,
The gowan's starry eye, Mary,
Just opens as I pass.
The burnie ripples sweet, Mary,
Over its rocky bed,
The mirror'd birch-trees meet, Mary,
The birch-trees overhead.

I wander down the stream, Mary,
This bright September morn,
I wander, and I dream, Mary,
Of days that ne'er return.

On such a morn as this, Mary,
Once we stood hand in hand,
And life seemed one with bliss, Mary,
And earth with Heaven's land.

Our hearts kept time and tune, Mary,
To Nature's matin hymn;
Our sun rode at its noon, Mary,
Without one cloud to dim.
Heart beating close to heart, Mary,
Hand clasped in hand we stood,
Till tears began to start, Mary,
From joy's o'erbrimming flood.

Now too my cheek is wet, Mary,
But ah! with other tears,
The sun of life has set, Mary,
Over the darkened years;
My heart has lost the tune, Mary,
Of Nature's melody,
The inner joy-note gone, Mary,
Makes false the harmony.

The heart is empty now, Mary,
Your love alone could fill,
A heart that hungers so, Mary,
Its pain but Death can still;
But Death,—or life and you, Mary,
Its longings can appease,
The lost note strike anew, Mary,
Re-knit the harmonies.

PARTING.

A FLEET of ships on the summer sea,
Of ships with sails all set,
To voyage bound,
The wide world round,
Earth's costliest stores to get.

They sailèd east, they sailèd west,
They sailèd south, and north,
And their hearts were sore,
For they dreamed no more
To meet upon the earth.

They sailèd north, they sailèd south,
They sailèd on and on,
One west, where rest,
The isles of the Blest,
And one to the rising sun.

And one where the Southern Cross shines bright,
And one where the glaciers gleam,
  Nor hopèd more
  Their native shore
To see save in blessèd dream.

They sailed by day, they sailed by night,
They sailèd on and on,
  By clear sunlight,
  And by moonbeams white,
Round, round as rides the sun.

They thought they were sailing east and east,
They thought they were sailing west,
  And north, and south,
  But they found in truth,
They had steer'd for *one* haven of rest.

For as they sailèd on and on,
Still they sailed round and round,
  And glad surprise
  Met in their eyes,
As their native shore they found.

So, sail we north, or sail we south,
Or sail we east, or west,
  Life's perfect sphere
  All rounded here,
May we meet in one Haven of Rest.

FORESHADOWS.

'And behold the axe is laid at the root of the tree.'

In midnight solitudes
  Wandered a Spirit white,
All through the solemn woods,
  He passèd by that night;
Pale was his face and shrouded,
  And his eye none might see,
For there shone, dim and clouded,
  The light of Destiny.

His footsteps noiselessly
  Trod through the sleeping wood,
As pale ghost restlessly
  Troubling its quietude;

In shadow, then, where moonlight
O'er silver mosses strayed,
A phantom axe that spirit white
By a proud tree hath laid.

When Morn all gloriously,
Walk'd through the solemn wood,
Still there majestically,
The mighty oak-tree stood;
Around its stout stem, lovingly,
The fair soft mosses cling,
And in its branches merrily
The young birds sit and sing.

But doom was writ that night,
When the phantom axe was laid,
In the solemn pale moonlight,
Of that dim, ghastly glade;
And the proud oak, quailing never,
Boweth his stately head,
And the fair moss, faithful ever,
Clingeth around the Dead.

A TEAR.

One by one to the far-off portal,
  One by one to the pearly door,
One by one to the Land Immortal,
  Come they whose pilgrimage is o'er.

But one bond all uniteth,
  Thus brought from far and near
Their brotherhood bespeaketh
  One sign alone,—a tear.

As dew-drop on the daisy,
  The silken lashes keep
A tear on the child's fresh beauty
  That cried itself to sleep.

As raindrop on white lily,
A tear blendeth the while,
On the sweet, dead face of the maiden,
With its pure, patient smile.

As diamond her coronet
Decking with radiant grace,
A tear, with gem-like lustre,
Shines on a queenly face.

The slave at last unfetter'd,
King, commoner, and peer,
The learned as the unlettered,—
In each eye stands a tear.

Oh, pledge of common brotherhood,
At Heaven's door as here,
All children of one family,
United by a tear.

Nor earth's sad children only
Bindeth that glittering ring,
In it, oh joy and wonder!
Stands Heaven's eternal King.

Oh pledge of common brotherhood,
Oh marriage ring most dear;
Thus Earth with Heaven uniting
The circle of a tear!

Close bound to one another
Within that mystic sphere,
Within the diamond circle,
The circle of a tear.

THE LIFE HID.

'For I am dead, and my life is hid with Christ in God.'

I HID in my heart my Life,
Of all life the fount to me,
My Life that was more than life,
I said, 'God shall not see.'

I buried my Idol deep,
And I took none with me,
When I went my guard to keep
O'er the Life that was life to me.

And round that hushed recess
Bloomed out all lovely things,
All Hope, and Joy, and Tenderness,
As flowers round hidden springs.

I said, 'For my dear Life's sake,
All life is dear to me,
My heart, God's garden it shall make.'
Yet said I, 'God shall not see.'

As when in Eden, long ago,
Our parents strove to hide,
They heard God, through the sunset's glow,
Walking at eventide;

Through my heart's garden, hushed and still,
Aglow with that Life of mine,
Sounded His voice with sudden thrill,
'Give me that Life of thine.'

I heard, and I could not fail to know
Whose voice was speaking there;
But I shrank in dread from the sudden blow,
And turned in my fierce despair.

'Nay, not my Life, oh Lord,' I said,
'Or you make my heart a tomb;
If the spring be dried at the fountain head,
How can the garden bloom?

'Can a desert praise thee, oh my God,
Where an Eden fair might shine?'
But still came the voice, the voice of God,
'Give me that Life of thine.'

I tore my Life up by the root,
I laid it in His hand;
I said, 'Can a rootless tree yield fruit,
Or bloom a springless land?'

He took in his hand that Life of mine,
Firmly and tenderly;
His face beamed with a Love divine,
As he said, 'It is hid with me.

'Why weep ye the bubbling fountain,
That the summer sun has dried?
It returns to the thirsty mountain,
In dewdrops purified;

'And not in one green spot only
Wells then the living tide,
But all the desert lonely,
Shall blossom glorified.'

So in my garden, hushed and still,
Where I thought my Life my dead,
'Twas but that God had kissed the rill,
And borne its drops o'erhead;

And the flowers I thought would wither,
When their earth-born spring was riven,
In beauty wider, rarer,
Bloom, watered now from Heaven.

And I hear God's voice repeating,
'Thy Life is hid with me;
Leave it in my safe keeping,
Tenfold I'll give it thee.

CLAN CAMPBELL'S WELCOME TO PRINCESS LOUISE.

MARCH 21, 1871.

(AN OSSIANIC ODE.)

To the Black Knights of Lochow comes a daughter of morning
Like the soft folds of mist her white arms clasp the mountains;
At the touch of her fingers the rock's heart is melted,
And clear crystal springs burst out from the stones.
As the harebell blooms out at the dew-kiss of morning,
So buddeth Love's flowers at the touch of her lips.

The lilies on Lochan Luskin are less white than
her forehead,
The sound of the Duglas less soft than her voice.
As the boughs of the birch trees droop over the
waters,
Over her swelling bosom is the fall of her tresses.

Welcome, oh! Daughter of Princes, to the land of
the mountains,
To the land of the mist-circled hills.
The eagle from his eyrie in the clouds flaps his
wings at thy coming,
The shy eyes of the deer watch thee over the
brackens,
They start not away at the sound of thy step.

Daughter of Princes, the rocks bid thee welcome,
And spread a purple carpet of heather for thy
feet.

The white mists of summer weave a veil for thy bridal,
The torrents have learnt a new song for thy greeting.

Welcome fair child of Victoria and Albert,
From the far sunny south to the land of the heather,
To the stout hearts that beat under green tartan plaids.
In the heart of our hills and our heroes we'll guard thee;
And the mountains shall perish, and the heart's blood cease beating,
Ere they fail to enshrine in the depths of their bosoms
The Daughter of Princes, the Bride of Lochow.

'BY THY BAPTISM, FASTING, AND TEMPTATION.'

In Jordan's wilderness, the voice of one that cried
To Israel of old,
Two baptisms foretold,
For all whose hearts unto his mighty words replied.

Behold who cometh now, up through the wilderness
The first his call to meet?
Hear Him the prophet greet,
'How shall I, sinful, wash Thee, King of Holiness?'

'Nay let it be so now,' and wherefore saidst Thou so,
Oh Lamb of God most pure?
Could Jordan's wave secure
Cleansing to Thee, whose soul no earthborn stain could know?

Nay, but Thou wouldèst thus proclaim in Jordan's flood
Thy service, by man's sign
Of baptism divine,
Awaiting Thy true baptism, Thy baptism of blood.

For e'en for Thy life's work, O Son of God most pure,
Thou, Holiest, didst require
A baptism of fire,
To save the tempted, Thou temptation, must endure.

From the baptizing wave, straight to the wilderness,
From the descending Dove,
God's words of praise and love,
Thou went'st to desert's gloom, silence, and emptiness.

And there Thou wast an hungered; all Thy nature faints
For food—'Oh satisfy
This hunger, or I die.'
The black rocks hear not; who is this answers Thy plaints?

A low voice whispers in Thine ear 'Why shouldst
Thou die?
These stones Thou canst make bread,
And all Thy soul be fed.
Why hunger? it will all Thy longing satisfy.'

We know not if for earthly food alone, O Christ,
This hunger sore of Thine,
Or if Thy soul divine
For light, and joy, and love too famishèd, Thou
criedst.

Starved in Earth's wilderness, Thy nature made for
Heaven,
Thou wast an hungerèd;
But this we know, and bread
Was offered, satisfying bread, but not God-given.

And all Thy soul cried for it, yet turnedst Thou away
From that base offering;
Then wast Thou crownèd King—
Then Thy true baptism—*that* Thine anointing day.

When Thou didst turn back to Thy hunger, didst
Thou know
Midst its sore yearning
That hunger was Thy crowning?
Or dream amidst its pain what glory lit Thy brow?

But men beheld it, when, forth from that awful fight,
Victor, by anguish great
Baptized and consecrate
Thou cam'st, of this dark world for evermore the
Light.

It was not sin, O Holiest, that Thou shouldst feel
That sore temptation;
Not sin, but consecration;
God's baptism, of Thy new name 'The Christ' the seal.

Thank God, oh Christ, that thus Thou wast an hun-
gered,
That thus Thy nature cried
And was not satisfied,
That so the Tempter came, and said Thou might'st
be fed,

And that Thou felt'st the pain of taking Thy desire
Back to Thine empty heart;
That thus Thou bor'st Thy part
In both man's consecrations—of water and of fire.

For not for Thee alone, O Lord, the Prophet's voice,
Two baptisms foretold;
Thus sealed, now as of old,
For all God's work, are still the servants of His choice.

O Christ, by that dread baptism, that hunger sore,
By that temptation dire,
That baffled heart's desire,
That glory of self-conquest, aid us evermore!

THE END OF JUBAL.

(A NEW VERSION.)

. . . . . .

The sun went down, and round him as he lay
Dim twilight gathered; hoary, old, and gray,
The weird woods towered above him, dead the light
In them as in his heart, all, all was night.
He moaned not, moved not, but as one entranced,
Felt not the slow hours creep, nor knew when glanced
The first pale moonbeams on the black, deep pool
That slept beside him; the soft fingers cool
Of the night-breeze, unfelt, toyed with his hair;
As when some kingly lion seeks his lair
When wounded sore, to die, so Jubal lay,
Voiceless and moveless, numbed with misery.

The night wore on—leaf-chequered moonbeams shed
Broad floods of silver radiance round his head,
Glistering with fairy light the mossy bank
That pillowed it; the wild fawn came and drank
From the dark starlit pool, her liquid eye
Upon his prostrate form gazed fearlessly,
So motionless he lay, enwrapt in agony.

So the night past—but when first twitter woke
Amongst the woods, first stir of leaves that broke
The starlight's stillness, with presage of dawn,
Ere yet the birds, to greet the coming morn,
Had opened their bright eyes, as yet no light,
And yet the dark was lightened;—in the night
Of Jubal's heart, came likewise the presage
Of Dawn that should not tarry, as though old age
Were slipping from his soul as fading night,
Merging the dark in twittering dreams of light.
Soft stir of leaves, faint carol of first bird,
Sweet lightening of the darkness, scarcely heard,
Dimly imaged, buzz of wakening life crept on his soul,

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